The Example of the Passion

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THE EXAMPLE OF THE PASSION.

FIVE MEDITATIONS.

BY

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(Of the Society of St. John the Evangelist.)

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PREFACE.

These Meditations were given in the Church of the Advent, Boston, on the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday of Holy Week. They have been since written out for publication at the request of several persons who wished to preserve them for subsequent use, and who thought that they would be helpful also to others.

2nd week after Easter, 1882.

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MEDITATION I.

Our Lord's Example of Patience in His Passion.

Contemplate Jesus going forth to meet the band of soldiers who came to apprehend Him. Hear Him rebuke Peter, who drew his sword and smote the high-priest's servant. "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (St. John xviii. 3–11.)

There are many different ways in which we may regard the Passion of our Lord. There are the more theological aspects of the Mystery—1. Its *Atoning Virtue* as a propitiation and satisfaction for the sins of the world; and 2. The *Redeeming Power*, breaking the bonds of evil, of pride, sensuality, and worldliness, whereby Satan held mankind enslaved. 3. There is the more spiritual and personal view of the Passion as the *appeal of love*, God drawing us with cords of

a man, with bands of love (Hos. xi. 4), the appeal of love for love, of a life laid down for a life to be offered to Him in return. 4. We love to dwell also upon the Passion as giving an assurance of our Lord's perfect *sympathy*. "We have not an high-priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: He was in all points tried and tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. iv. 15.) 5. There is still another aspect in which we are called to regard the Passion—as *an example*. *The exemplary force of the Passion*—this it is which is specially presented to our consideration in the Epistle for Palm Sunday. Year by year, Passiontide after Passiontide, as the Cross is lifted up in our midst, and Jesus Christ is evidently set forth crucified before our eyes (Gal. iii. 1), the Church echoes the exhortation of the Apostle, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. ii. 5.) The Church and the Apostle bid us learn to follow in His footsteps. Of this lesson we are day by day reminded in the Collect for Holy Week, in which we pray to God, who,

of His tender love towards mankind, has sent His Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the *example* of His great humility, mercifully to grant that *we* may follow the *example* of His patience, and so be made partakers of His resurrection. Yes, we must never forget this most practical view of the Passion, this first duty of Passiontide, "since Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh," to arm ourselves likewise with the same mind. (1 St. Pet. iv. 1.) Year after year He speaks to us from His cross: "If any man will be My disciple —will have any share in My propitiation, in My redemptive work, if any will learn My love and be admitted to My secrets—let him take up his cross and *follow Me.*" (St. Luke xiv. 27, &c.) "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps." (1 St. Pet. ii. 21.)

We consecrate this week to the worship of the Crucified. We offer Thee, Blessed Lord, the homage of our admiration as well as of our gratitude. We acknowledge Thee, in all

the shame and humiliation of Thy Passion, to be indeed "the Son of Man," the Flower and Beauty of the race. The moral loveliness of Thy suffering draws us to Thee. We would renew our dedication to Thy service; we would seek to be conformed to Thy likeness. The Apostle's impassioned exclamation finds some echo (by the inspiration of Thy Spirit) within our hearts, his ardent longing to "know Thee, and the power of Thy resurrection, and the fellowship of Thy sufferings being made conformable to Thy death." (Phil. iii. 10.)

Having, then, in previous years considered different events in the history of the Passion as recorded by St. John, let us this Holy Week dwell upon some points in our Lord's example in the Passion, His *patience* and *silence*, His *prayer*, the *love* manifested throughout the Passion, and its lesson of *unworldliness*.

And first let us take that virtue which the Collect directly mentions, *His patience*.

I. The opportunity to imitate—afar off indeed it must be—Christ's example in this particular is given to us all. "Man that is

born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery." Who does not experience the truth of the complaint in one form or another? How many are included in the Church's touching supplication for "all who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate!" Pains of body or the languor of poor health; poverty and loss; bereavement and disappointment; misunderstandings, alienations, or the lack of sympathy; anxiety for others' temporal or spiritual welfare; the pressure of temptation in the present or the burden of past sin—how common, how well-nigh universal do we see such sufferings as we look around! how often we experience them within!

It is the prevalence of these and like sorrows that gives to Passiontide such sweetness, that makes the Cross of Jesus so welcome, its lifting up so necessary, both for our consolation and for our example. We turn for refuge to the Man of Sorrows. Holy Week should, indeed, inspire us not merely with idle sympathy for Him, but nerve us to bear our sufferings, of whatever kind

they may be, by assuring us of His sympathy with us, while His example is set forth for our imitation.

Let us dwell, then, on the *Sorrows of Jesus*, and let us beware of a suggestion which is sometimes made to us (we probably all have felt it), which would rob us of the consolation this consideration should bring, both of the force of His example and of the reality of His sympathy. "Can *He* really feel for me? Did He, could He, really suffer, if He was, as we believe, the Incarnate Son of God? *I*, poor, frail mortal, am subject to suffering of many kinds. Most real my suffering is. But in Him, the Incarnate Son of God, can there have been more than the appearance of suffering? His divinity upheld Him, so that He could not fall. Did it not shelter Him from the reality of struggle which I experience?" Such thoughts may present themselves to our minds. But we must remember always that the two natures in our Blessed Lord were perfectly distinct, though united in His one Divine Person. "The right faith is (and, oh, how full of

consolation is that right faith!) that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man . . . perfect God and perfect Man. . . . And although He be God and Man, yet He is not two (persons) but One Christ; One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God; *One* altogether, *not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.*" (Athanasian Creed.) It is not by transferring the qualities and attributes of one nature to the other that the Godhead and Manhood are united in Jesus; not so was the Word made flesh. By reason, indeed, of the union of His human nature with His Divine Person it is true that none could take away His life, but He laid it down of Himself. (St. John x. 18.) Jesus thus endured, both in body and in soul, more than would have been sufficient to destroy human life in any mere man before He allowed death to come upon Him, and, in voluntary surrender, "bowed His head and gave up the ghost." (St. John xix. 38.) His Godhead did not shield His human nature from suffering, though it may

have upheld that human nature in life, that it might be capable of suffering more than otherwise would have been possible. Neither had His manhood any charmed life, so that it passed through suffering without real experience of pain. On the contrary, there must have been in the humanity of Jesus a capacity for suffering far exceeding aught that we, with our dulled sensibilities, can realize. The higher we ascend in the scale of being the more capacity is found for suffering, as for refined delight and enjoyment. The sense of pain depends upon activity of mind and delicacy of nerve. What, then, must have been the capacity for pain in the virgin Body of Jesus, with its delicate and perfect organization? How keen the sensitiveness of His human Soul to injustice and wrong! What bitter suffering did ingratitude and rejection cause to that loving Heart, when "He came unto His own and His own received Him not;" how grievous must have been the treachery of Judas, the cowardice of Peter, and the rest, as they left Him alone in the midst of foes! And what must have

been the overwhelming anguish to His pure Spirit, caused by the sense of sin and the withdrawal of Divine consolations, which were His food and life.

His soul, we can understand, was indeed "exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." (St. Matt. xxvi. 38.) "Behold and see (He could indeed exclaim) if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow." (Lam. i. 12.)

Meditate, O mourner, upon the accumulated woes of Jesus, the Man of Sorrows (Isa. liii. 3; Lam. iii. 1); His afflictions of body, mind, and spirit; the sorrows of Gethsemane, Gabbatha, and Golgotha. See how all thy sorrows are covered by His, how in every pain thou mayest claim His sympathy and follow His example. Truly may we pray with St. Buonaventura,

"In the Lord's atoning grief
Be our rest and sweet relief;
Store we deep in heart's recess
All the shame and bitterness.

Thorns and cross, and nails and lance,
Wounds our treasure that enhance,
Vinegar, and gall, and reed,
And the pang His Soul that freed:

May these all our spirits sate,
And with love inebriate,
In our hearts plant virtue's root,
And mature its glorious fruit."

II. Having considered the overwhelming sorrow of Jesus in His Passion, let us meditate upon His majestic endurance, *the unfailing patience with which all was borne.* Contemplate Him on the way going up to Jerusalem in full consciousness of all that should befall Him. Every detail of the coming Passion was known to Him, and foretold to His followers. "The Son of Man (He told them) shall be delivered unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him." (St. Mark x. 33, 34.) Notwithstanding He set His face like a flint (Isa. l. 7), and "went before" His disciples, pressing on towards this Baptism of Blood. Consider the heroic endurance, the majestic grandeur of the Sufferer.

See Him at the Last Supper mystically

offer Himself to the Father, in the broken bread and the out-poured cup presenting His Body to be broken, His Blood to be shed ; the Sacrifice of Himself is then in intention made, and with perfect voluntariness, "Himself the Victim, and Himself the Priest."

Behold Him in the Garden, while shrinking, according to the truth of His human nature, from all that was coming upon Him, accept, after His thrice-repeated prayer, the cup of sorrow which could not pass away, and then "knowing all things that should come upon Him," go forth to meet the band that came to apprehend Him. "Whom seek ye?" He says to His captors, as, after a manifestation of His power to show the freedom of His death, He surrenders Himself to them. He reproves Peter for his impatience. "Put up thy sword (He says) into the sheath : the cup which My Father hath given Me shall I not drink it?" (St. John xviii. 4-11.)

His majesty in very truth is shown in His endurance. The Lion of the tribe of Judah,

the Conqueror, the Monarch, is seen to be the Lamb which was slain. His strength is shown in meekness, His conquest in self-sacrifice. (Rev. v. 5, 6.)

Ah! shame on our cowardliness, our self-indulgence, our murmuring and repining! Lord Jesus, as I worship Thee in Thy Passion, may I indeed arm myself with the same mind. (1 St. Pet. iv. 1.)

III. Let us consider *the motive of His Patience*. What urged Him to this endurance? what inspired this courage? There was a two-fold motive in Him, the same must be found in us, the two-fold motive of *Obedient Love* and *Humble Penitence*.

1. "The cup *which My Father hath given Me*, shall I not drink it?" These words expressed the obedient Love of Jesus. By His Passion He would prove His love and loyalty to the Father, come what might, and at any cost. Man had fallen from God, gone apart from Him, deterred by the fear of pain, allured by the hope of pleasure. He had chosen this and that object of worldly delight, sensual pleasure, earthly wealth or honor, his

own self interest, in preference to the all-holy and all-good will of God. Man must return in the person of the Second Adam by renouncing and reversing these mis-choices. He must learn to say unto the Lord, "Thou art my God, my goods are nothing unto Thee" (Ps xvi. 2); "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee, O Lord? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison with Thee" (Ps. lxxiii. 24): He must be "obedient unto death" (Phil. ii. 8). Thus does Jesus our Leader and Representative offer Himself to the Father. "Though He slay Me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job xiii. 15); "lo I come to do Thy will, O God; a Body hast Thou prepared Me" (Heb. x. 5-7), to be the instrument of Thy service, in suffering as in action. In this spirit of loving obedience did Jesus accept all the sorrows of His Passion. In this spirit, not with stoical indifference, must we too accept all from our Father's Hand, knowing that nothing can come upon us without at the least His permission. There is a joy in earthly and human love in surrendering oneself entirely to another, when heart

beats with heart and will is linked with will. A sweet calm joy there is when the human will clasps the will of the Creator, and when we rest ourselves upon the loving Bosom of our God.

"My God, my Father, while I stray,
Far from my home on life's rough way,
O teach me from my heart to say,
'Thy will be done.'

Renew my will from day to day,
Blend it with Thine, and take away
All that now makes it hard to say,
'Thy Will be done.'"

To *accept all from God*, as at least allowed by Him, this is one secret of patience; another is to *regard all sufferings as so many assaults of the Adversary*, whereby he endeavors to break down our steadfastness. We see the two truths combined in the drama of Job's temptation. Satan accuses Job before God, and seeks permission to try him with various forms of suffering. By the loss of his goods, of his children, by the pains inflicted upon his body, the taunts of his wife, the coldness of his friends, Satan seeks to dis-

prove Job's loyalty to God, to break down his integrity. Yet the temptations of his faithful servant are all known and measured by the Lord. Satan cannot exceed the limits He lays down. And Job, recognizing God's hand in that which He allowed, worshipped in the midst of his affliction, saying "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the Name of the Lord." (Job i, ii.)

In like manner Jesus in the Garden, while He accepts the cup which His Father gave, recognizes that the cup is handed to Him by evil powers. "The Prince of this World cometh," He said to His disciples in anticipation of His trial, "but hath nothing in Me" (St. John xiv. 30); "This is your hour," He said to the Chief Priests who accompanied the band to apprehend Him, "and the power of darkness." (St. Luke xxii. 52, 53).

To view sorrows and difficulties as devices of the Evil One to draw us from God, appeals to our generosity, to all there is in us of heroism. We will show ourselves on the Lord's side. We would not that Satan should

triumph over Him in us, or that He should be dishonored by our fall.

2. The second motive for Patience is a spirit of *Humble Penitence*. Jesus felt this, as the Representative of the fallen race, though Himself personally sinless. As the Second Adam He bore the penalty due to the offences of the First Adam and his descendants. "He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21; comp. Isa. liii.) By His humiliation, His poverty, His austerity, He in loving penitence offers reparation to the Father for our sins of pride and worldliness and sensuality. This was the secret of His patience. Shall it not be so with us? Verily with the penitent robber who suffered by His side we must say, "We suffer indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man hath done nothing amiss." (St. Luke xxiii. 41.) O my God, which of Thy gifts have I not abused! Bodily appetites have been wrongly indulged; mental faculties uncultivated, or used for my own aggrandisement instead of for Thy glory; in

health and spirits I have been forgetful of Thee; friends have been preferred to Thee; money spent without thought of my stewardship for Thee. All, all, alas! bear witness against me. Shall I not then now lovingly and penitently associate myself with Thy justice, and acknowledging that I have forfeited all claim on Thy good gifts, willingly accept such loss and deprivation as Thou mayest allow to come on me? In all pain of body and sorrow of heart let me acknowledge the justice of Thy punishment. I receive less, far less, than my sins deserve. Many of our troubles we have indeed brought upon ourselves. The dryness and coldness in prayer at which we repine, is it not the result of our wilfully or carelessly allowed distractions in times past? Evil thoughts which haunt the mind have they not once been cherished? Even the misunderstanding or want of sympathy in friends which grieves us, we have in part provoked. If others only knew us as we really are, how much worse things might they justly say against us than those which may be now unjustly said.

Go forth then, O soul, in imitation of the Patience of Jesus, to meet that dreaded trial or humiliation. Face the possibility of disappointment, or failure in that on which thou hast set thine heart. Take up lovingly, penitently, that cross at which thou hast rebelled. Offer thyself to be perfected, like thy Master and Head, through sufferings. Beg of Him to sweeten the bitter waters of thy sorrow by His cross and the sympathy of His Passion. Ask of Him to temper judgment with mercy, but refuse not the discipline He appoints. He will lay on thee no greater burden than He will enable thee to bear. Let Patience have her perfect work. Arm yourself with the same mind which was in Jesus. Say with Him, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

Almighty and Everlasting God, Who, of Thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the Cross, that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility; Mercifully

grant, that we may both follow the example of His patience, and also be made partakers of His resurrection ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MEDITATION II.

The Silence of Jesus in His Passion.

Contemplate the Lord standing bound as a prisoner before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. The chief priests and elders of the people stand by and accuse Him of many things. But Jesus answered nothing. (St. Matt. xxvii. 11–14; St. Mark xv. 3.)

After our Lord's patience and endurance we may well go on to consider His example of silence in His passion. On three several occasions during the course of the mock trials to which He was subjected, His silence is specially noted by the evangelists with the impression of wonderment that it made. Before the chief priests, before Pontius Pilate, and before Herod alike, Jesus was silent and held His peace. They all marvelled. And so may we. For whether we contrast His silence with what we might have expected from

Him, or with what we almost certainly should have experienced in another, with what would have been found in ourselves, it is a matter of marvel. There is some deep mystery in this silence of the Incarnate Word of God. Let us consider, then, the meaning of this silence, and seek to learn its lessons.

I. *It was a Judicial Silence.* We worship Him who so stood silent as the eternal Word of God, by whom the Father reveals Himself to all men by the light and voice of conscience, in Nature also, and by His Providence, as well as by more direct revelation. He it was who had spoken to the patriarchs and prophets, and had now become man, and had clothed Himself in human flesh, that He might the more plainly and in our own language declare to us the truth concerning God and concerning man (St. John i. 1–18); He came to bear witness to the truth (St. John xviii. 37); one of His chosen titles is "the faithful and true witness (Rev. iii. 14); yet He is silent, and that when questioned. Why? Because those who interrogate Him and demand His speech, are not worthy to hear, are not capa-

ble of receiving His word. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" had been His proclamation throughout His ministry. (St. Matt. xiii. 9.) "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God," He had said to the Jews before. (St. John viii. 47.) And for this reason He speaks not now.

1. *Before the Council of the Chief Priests and Elders* Jesus is silent, for He knows that the inquiry which they feign is not intended for the purpose of eliciting the truth; it is simply held with the object of carrying out predetermined plans, of gaining matter for formal charges to be brought against Him, whom they have already sentenced to death, against whom they are seeking testimony, even willing to buy false witness. Stifling conscience, abusing their official position, in spite of the evidence which they cannot deny—the evidence of His *words* (of which their own officers reported, "Never man spake like this man," St. John vii. 46), of His *works* (the supernatural character of which was so plain that they were forced to ascribe

them to Beelzebub, St. Luke xi. 14, 15), of His *life* (against which none could bring any accusation), of His exact and literal fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies, in spite of all He knew them to be "moved with envy" at His success in gaining the attention of the people, and moved with hatred at His denunciations of their own worldliness and hypocrisy, and for these reasons determined to put Him to death. They do but seek to entangle Him in His speech. They have not the honest and good heart which is capable of receiving His word. And therefore Jesus is silent, absolutely silent, until He is adjured in the name of God to declare whether He is the Christ, the Son of God; and then He prefaces His answer by words which explain His previous silence, and expose the duplicity of His questioners: "If I tell you, ye will not believe. And if I also ask you, ye will not answer Me, nor let me go." (St. Luke xxii. 66–71; St. Matt. xxvi. 59–64; St. Mark xiv. 55–62; St. John xviii. 19–23.)

Deliver me, O Lord, from all hypocrisy. Grant that I may not, like Baalam, seek to ex-

tract from Thee a permission to carry out my own designs, but with pure intention may seek to know and do Thy will. "Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth Thee."

2. *Before Pilate also Jesus is silent.* In Pilate He sees a supercilious, worldly man, set to administer justice and to maintain truth, yet by crooked policy showing his moral weakness and cowardice, afraid to condemn Jesus, and yet still more afraid to offend Cæsar, or the rulers of the people. So, having given him hints of the supernatural character of the kingdom which He claimed, a kingdom not of this world, a kingdom which was no rival to the power that Pilate represented, a kingdom of the Truth—an idea that was altogether beyond Pilate's conception—having given him these hints, Jesus is silent. Pilate was not acting up to what he knew. He knew that for envy the chief priests had delivered Jesus to him; he himself declared that he found no fault in the prisoner; yet he was willing to have Him scourged, and finally to surrender Him, though innocent, to the will of the people.

He was not obeying the voice of conscience, which spoke within, and bade him be fair, and just, and bold. And therefore he deserved no further word. "Every one," Jesus declared, "that is of the truth heareth my word." Pilate was not of the truth; the Truth was therefore silent before him. The voice of justice was silent in Pilate, the voice of Divine revelation could not be heard by him. (St. John xviii. 33—xix. 16; St. Matt. xxvii. 11–14; St. Mark xv. 3.)

Grant me, O Lord, so to listen to Thy voice within my own conscience that with Thy sheep I may recognize Thy voice when Thou speakest in Thy Scriptures, by Thy Church, and by Thy Providence. (St. John x. 26, 27.)

3. *Before Herod, too, was Jesus silent.* Herod (St. Luke tells us) had been desirous to see Jesus for a long season because of the report which he had heard of Him, and he hoped he might see some miracle wrought by Him. Therefore he questioned with Jesus in many words; "but Jesus answered him nothing." Not one single word—even of warning, and explanation, such as were vouchsafed to

the Sanhedrim and to Pilate—did He speak to Herod. To this degraded sensualist, the profligate murderer of John the Baptist, whose denunciations of sin he liked to hear but would not obey, who only looked for Jesus as a magician to gratify his curiosity, to such an one Jesus is absolutely silent. (St. Luke xxiii. 8–11.) To be mocked by Herod and his courtiers is indeed a royal honor, for such are incapable of appreciating aught that is pure, and true, and noble.

We see, then, the lesson of the silence of the Lord regarded in this light. It is *judicial*, a penalty on those who have rendered themselves unfit to hear. *Pride* in the chief priests, *worldliness* in Pilate, *sensuality* in Herod, shut out the voice of God.

a. Let us lay to heart *the warning*. God is ever silent when not rightly approached and invoked. Only to those who seek His counsel with purity of heart and simplicity of desire, with faithful obedience to His word already spoken, will He reveal Himself. The pure in heart shall see God. (St. Matt. v. 8.) To the meek mysteries are revealed. (Ecclus.

iii. 19.) He that willeth to do the will of God he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God. (St. John vii. 17.) He that hath to him shall be given; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. (St. Mark iv. 25.) As God spoke to His prophet of old concerning those who set the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face, and then came to inquire of Him, so He ever says, "I will not be inquired of at all by them." (Ezek. xiv. 3.) We must pray, from all hardness of heart and contempt of Thy word and commandment, from disregard of Thy inspirations, from neglect of Thy warnings, from failure to correspond with Thy grace, good Lord, deliver me. Pardon my unfaithfulness. Cast me not away, as I have deserved, from Thy presence. Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

b. And in this judicial silence of Jesus there is an *example* too as well as a warning, the example of *reverence* in approaching and in communicating Divine truth. He will not unnecessarily expose truth to the risk of rejection. He will not unfold high mysteries

concerning His Divine Sonship before those who are incapable of apprehending such teaching. To the people, throughout His ministry, He spake in parables "as they were able to hear," while He expounded all things to his disciples when they were alone. (St. Mark iv. 33, 34.) To His enemies He is silent, both in judgment and in mercy, lest their guilt should be increased.

He bids us practice a like reserve, not casting pearls before swine (St. Matt. vii. 6), nor rashly and inconsiderately propounding the deep things of God to babes in Christ. (1 Cor. ii. 13; Heb. v. 14.) What a needed lesson is this in days of much and rash religious controversy, a lesson to be reverent to that, to Him, *of* Whom we speak, to be considerate of those *to* whom we speak. It was the warning of one of old, "Periculosum est etiam verum dicere de Deo." Let us beg pardon for all our sins of irreverence, and grace ever to honor God's Holy Name and Word.

II. The silence of Jesus was the expression, so to speak, of His patience, it was the *Silence of Obedience.* "Christ suffered for us,

leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." (1 St. Pet. ii. 21–23.) "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." (Isa. liii. 7.) Jesus accepted the cup from His Father's Hand without complaint. How often with us is patience spoilt, the virtue of suffering and endurance lost, by murmuring and repining!

It is not, we must always remember, the mere bearing of pain, but its willing acceptance, which profits. "Non mors sed voluntas sponte morientis placuit Deo," said St. Bernard of the Passion of the Redeemer. It is not the mere fact of death, but the willing acceptance of death; not the mere shedding of blood, but its being poured out, the laying down of life, which is acceptable to God.

Let us not in sorrows or pains forfeit their salutary effect by complaints, but accept them from God as means whereby we may be drawn nearer to Him.

"I became dumb, and opened not my mouth; *for it was Thy doing*." (Ps. xxxix. 10.)

III. Jesus' silence was likewise the *Silence of Humility*. Of Him it had been foretold, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street." (Isa. xlii. 2.) And now in His Passion He is not eager to vindicate Himself, nor forward to assert His claims. He answers not until adjured. Though accused of many things He holds His peace. O Blessed Jesus, suffering false accusation in silence, how dost Thou rebuke our anxiety and fretfulness under possible misrepresentation, our forward self-assertion, our false or equivocating excuses, our boastful and exaggerating claims, our vainglorious self-complacent speeches! Thou dost by Thy Silence offer reparation for these and other like sins of my speech. Thou dost by Thy example bid me to restrain my words.

"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth and keep the door of my lips." (Ps. cxli. 3.) We have often pleaded falsely: Thou didst not plead at all, but didst commend Thy cause to the Righteous Judge. So would I henceforth act. What I am in Thy sight, O Lord, that I truly am, neither less nor more. "Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God."

IV. It was the *Silence of Charity*. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not."

Throughout the Passion there is not even from Him, the All Holy, All Just, one hasty word, or word of anger.

He lovingly expostulated with Judas up to the very last. He warns Peter. But He upbraids neither. He cautions the Chief Priests and Pilate. He does not denounce even Herod. For the soldiers, and for all concerned in the deed, of which they were the actual executioners, He prays, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." By one rough word He might have destroyed that wicked crew. Instead thereof

"Seven times He spake seven words of love,
And all three hours His silence cried
For mercy on the souls of men."

We see the rebuke of, the atonement for, our words of hasty reproof, our malicious, hateful words. "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." (Prov. xv. 1.) Was not His silence eloquent? This was the argument by which the rough Roman soldiers would be most certainly convinced of His supernatural character; this was a kind of evidence which came home to those whom none other would reach. This silent, patient, persevering love melted some hearts there. "*Omnia vincit amor.*" So, O Lord, would I learn to win those who oppose themselves by a love that is not provoked to evil, but overcomes evil with good.

In Jesus' loving silence let us see the rebuke not only of our unkind words but also of our *thoughtless and inconsiderate words.* How much evil may they do! How easily gossip degenerates into detraction, and detraction into calumny—that three-edged

sword (as St. Bernard calls it), which at one stroke slays the speaker, and the listener, as well as the person who is the subject of conversation. Speaking much, we are apt to speak of things that are not fitting. (1 Tim. v. 13.) "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth, and the tongue is a fire," scattering sparks of destruction, inflaming passions, exciting suspicions, fostering discontent, provoking wrath. (St. James iii. 5, 6.)

The tongue is indeed "an unruly member," which is seldom tamed. Jesus, in His Passion, would teach us to tame it. We are bidden to arm ourselves with the same mind which was in Him; to take up our cross and follow Him; to imitate His self-discipline. On the cross, in the Crucified, we see the emblem of the life of self-restraint which is necessary for man in a fallen world. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh," that, no part of our nature being destroyed, but all subjected to holy discipline, every faculty may be rightly and truly used for the glory of God and for the good of our brethren. And as we contemplate Thy silence, Blessed

Jesus, we learn the necessity, we beg the grace, to guard our words, to restrain our speech. Speech is, indeed, a sacred gift, the reflection in man's nature, which is made in the image of God, of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who is the Word of God." (St. John i. 1–14; Rev. xix. 13.)

Blessed Jesus, Eternal Word of God! Thou didst wait until *the fulness of time* to take upon Thyself our nature, thus teaching us restraint in speech. Thou *wast made flesh*, teaching us to utter our words in humility. Thou wast incarnate *full of grace and truth.* Oh, that our words may be always true and always loving, to the glory of God and to the edification of our brethren. Pardon, we pray Thee, our many sins of speech, our many idle and worse than idle words, the words contrary to reverence, to purity, to truth, to love. Remedy their mischief. Give us grace after Thine example, O silent Sufferer, to restrain our speech.

Almighty God, who hast given Thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin,

and also an ensample of godly life; give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that His inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavor ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MEDITATION III.

Our Lord's Example of Prayer in His Passion.

Contemplate Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, bowed down to the earth in prayer. See His sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. Hear His earnest cry, "O My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

I. The virtue which we now consider as exemplified by our Lord in His Passion is very intimately connected with those on which we have already meditated, His patience and His silence. St. Peter in a list of Christian graces developed one from another, bids us "add to (or develop from) our knowledge temperance, and to our temperance add patience, and to our patience, godliness." (2 St. Pet. i. 6.) Temperance, as here used, would include silence as one element of Christian self-restraint;

to this more active self-discipline we are to add patience, the more passive endurance of evils that come upon us from without. And to both must be added godliness, the habit of mind, that is, of referring all things to God, of recognizing His hand in all, which looks to Him in all the circumstances of life, which takes all from Him, does and bears all for Him, offers all to Him. This is godliness. This it is to live a godly, as well as a righteous and a sober life, to "walk with God."

The expression of such a habit of mind, of such a spirit, is *Prayer.* Without godliness endurance may be hard and proud, silence may be sullen. And so we consider our Lord's prayerfulness as the secret of His silence, and as the strength of His patience. His silence was no sullen self-sufficiency, His patience was no stoical indifference. He refrained from words to man because He spoke with God, and in order to this higher communion. So must it be with us. One of the evils of our overmuch speaking is this, that we are thereby distracted from God, devotion is dissipated as we let ourselves run out in

words to man. We must practice silence with a view to prayer, as, in Holy Week especially, we seek to draw near to God. "Commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still." (Ps. iv. 4.)

Consider also the relation of prayer to patience. In our sorrows how much better would it be if, silent towards our fellows, we laid our complaints before God. There would be less danger then of pride, as to what we bear, or of uncharitableness, in telling of others' faults that have caused us pain.

Let us not be too ready to seek earthly and human consolations. Sympathy is, indeed, a Christian virtue. We are to bear one another's burdens, to be ready, humbly and lovingly, both to give and receive help, acknowledging our dependence one upon another. But we should not *rest* in this. For then sorrows would fail to a great extent of their devinely intended purpose. Bereavement, disappointment, the failure of earthly hopes, are designed to lift us up to a higher sphere, to force us, as it were, to lay up treasures above, as we find how easily we are despoiled of that

which we store up here. (St. Matt. vi. 19, 20.) At least sorrows should serve to shake us loose from earthly things. Let us see that we do not just change from one object of earthly delight and satisfaction to another, from the pursuit of pleasure to that of wealth, from wealth to honor, like little birds hopping from one bough to another, but continually perching themselves afresh within reach of danger instead of flying up aloft. Rather let us lift up our hearts to Him in whom alone they can find true rest. As the outward man decayeth the inward man should be renewed. (2 Cor. iv. 16.) God, in very love, allows the wine of earthly consolation and joy to run short or fail, in order that He may impart to the soul the better wine of heavenly joy and gladness. Let us not seek to fill our cups again with the wine of earth. (St. John ii. 10.)

"From joys that failed my soul to fill,
From hopes that all beguiled,
To changeless rest in Thy dear will,
Lord Jesu, call Thy child."

"When I am in heaviness I will think upon

God: when my heart is vexed, I will complain" to Him (Ps. lxxvii. 3). This was the secret of Jesus' patience and courage. In the midst of all false accusations and misrepresentations He "committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." (1 St. Pet. ii. 23.) In view of desertion by all He could say with perfect calmness "Behold the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I *am not alone because the Father is with me.*" (St. John xvi. 32.) This is the spirit that breathes throughout the Psalter, which finds its highest expression in Christ our Head. Consider, for instance, such words as these, as said by Christ, and to be taken up by us as His members. "They have spoken against Me with false tongues: they have compassed Me about with words of hatred, and fought against Me without a cause. For the love that I had unto them, lo they take now My contrary part: but I give myself unto prayer" (literally, "I am prayer," prayer is the utterance of my life). (Ps. cix. 2, 3.)

"In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, Thy comforts have refreshed my soul." "O how plentiful is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee: and that Thou hast prepared for them that put their trust in Thee, even before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them privily by Thy presence from the provoking of all men: Thou shalt keep them secretly in Thy tabernacle from the strife of tongues." (Ps. xxxi. 21, 22.)

Do we not see an illustration of our Lord's calm restful union with God throughout the Passion in the prayer which He uttered in the extremity of pain and anguish as they nailed Him to the cross? "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (St. Luke xxiii. 34.) *We* are so apt to be distracted from prayer by suffering or worry and anxiety. At the very time when we need it most we often use it least. We act as if prayer were a kind of luxury, to be enjoyed only in seasons of calm and quietude, instead of being the means of calming and quieting our spirits.

"Lord, help us when our spirits bleed
With contrite anguish sore,
And when our hearts are cold and dead
O help us, Lord, the more."

Thus let us first consider generally *the relation of Prayer to the other virtues of Patience and Silence*, and then go on to meditate more particularly upon *our Lord's spirit of Prayer throughout the Passion*, the strength derived from prayer in which He went forth to suffer. We too must meet sorrow and suffering in the strength of Prayer.

Moses on the mount and Joshua below contending with the enemy represent the different elements of the Christian life to be combined in each individual as well as in the collective Body of Christ, the element of devotion and the element of struggle. (Ex. xvii.) Prayer strengthens us for battle. In prayer we see things in a clearer light, from God's point of view. We are enabled thus to accept from our Father's hands the cup from which otherwise we should shrink. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (St. John xviii. 11.)

II. Let us meditate upon *the Special Prayer with which Jesus entered on the Passion.*

A spirit of prayer is gained by the practice of Prayer. If we would learn to "walk with God" in a continual habit of prayer, lifting up the heart to Him in "the fellowship of the Holy Ghost," we must be careful in our observance of stated times of prayer. Prolonged prayer at certain seasons will help to form a prayerful spirit and habit of mind.

In the history of the Passion we see *three stages of Prayer* through which Jesus passed.

1. In the upper room along with the solemn offering of Himself to the Father in the first Eucharist for all that should follow, His Body to be broken, His blood to be shed, there was the great prayer for Himself and for His disciples recorded at length by the Beloved Disciple. (St. John xvii.) Here was the jubilant, eucharistic offering. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God, yea I am content to do it." (Ps. xl. 9, 10.) With this prayer of oblation corresponds the dedication which we make of ourselves at some time of devotion, at Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Com-

munion, to do and bear all things for God, with a general knowledge that suffering and tribulation will be involved in His service, but as yet with no present sense of the cross we must take up.

2. From the upper room, when they had sung a hymn, Jesus led His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane; and there again He engaged in prayer. Here is the second stage of His prayer. Now He is withdrawn from the disciples, even from the chosen three; His soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death. He wrestles and agonizes in prayer. "With strong crying and tears He offers petitions and entreaties to Him that was able to save Him from (or, out of) death; and was heard for his reverent piety;" or (as the words may be translated*) "was heard to the removing of His fear," the apprehension, that is, which as true Man He felt at the prospect of all that was coming upon Him,—the death of shame and torture; the desertion by all, being left alone

* See Dr. Kay on Heb. v. 7 in "The Speaker's Commentary."

in the hands of enemies; the sense of sin pressing upon His pure soul, as He, who personally knew no sin, is made a sin-offering for us, whose representative He has become, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. v. 21); the obscuring of the light of the Father's countenance. "O my Father, if it be possible," He prays, "let this cup pass from Me." (St. Matt. xxvi. 39.) Here is the prayer of the suffering soul, when sorrow is actually upon it. The triumphant "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God," is repeated in a minor key, as He prayed a second time, the Human will in perfect accord with the Divine will, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." (St. Matt. xxvi. 42.)

Here we see the pattern of prayer when pain or shame are actually upon us. Let us pour out our hearts before God, telling Him our wants and fears and sorrows, while we leave Him to answer our prayer as He sees best.

3. After this prayer in the Garden, answered by the coming of the Angel to succour His suffering manhood (St. Luke xxii. 43),

Jesus went forth with perfect fortitude and assurance to meet His enemies, "knowing all things that should come upon Him." (St. John xviii. 4.)

In Him truly were the prophet's words fulfilled, "The Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." (Isa. l. 7.)

After the agony of prayer, perfect calmness is regained. "Alone yet not alone," He abides in peace throughout the Passion. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." (Isa. xxvi. 3.) After the bitter cry from out of the darkness upon the Cross, in the temporary veiling of the Father's face, "My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" (St. Mark xv. 34), there follows the calm commendation of His human soul in perfect trust to the Father, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." (St. Luke xxiii. 46.)

III. In the prayer of Jesus in the Garden we see the pattern of all prayers. We may note *five points of perfection in His prayer* with

which to compare and, alas, contrast our prayers.

1. His *Solitude.* He was withdrawn from the disciples. (St. Luke xxii. 41.) There must be an abstraction of heart at least from earthly things, if we would really draw near to God, and hold communion with Him. How easily are my thoughts dissipated, how loath am I to retire for devotion. I must learn to enter into my closet and shut to the door of my heart at least, that I may pray to my Father who seeth in secret.

2. His *Reverence.* "He kneeled down and prayed." (St. Luke xxii. 41.) "He fell on the ground." (St. Mark xiv. 35.) How careless often are my prayers in public and in private! How wanting in a sense of His Majesty to whom I draw near!

3. His *Earnestness.* "Being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." (St. Luke xxii. 44.) And my prayers, alas, are so formal and mechanical. Yet I am bidden to "ask" and "seek" and "knock" (St. Matt. vii. 7) with increasing in-

tensity of desire. So may I hope to obtain. After this example, O Lord Jesus, the true Israel, who as a Prince hast power with God, may I wrestle in prayer, that so I may prevail. (Gen. xxxii. 24–28; Hos. xii. 4.)

4. His *Perseverance.* Three times did Jesus offer the same prayer. (St. Matt. xxvi. 44.) How often, O Lord, have I been like Thy sleeping disciples, easily giving over prayer, when Thou dost bid me watch unto prayer and continue therein. Teach me, Lord, and help me to pray and not to faint. (St. Luke xviii. 1.)

5. His *Filial Resignation and Trust,* as He prays, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." (St. Matt. xxvi. 39.) Prayer is not to bend God's will to ours, but to lift ours to God, and to call forth those gifts which He is more ready to give than we to ask, but which He has appointed our supplication to be the condition of our profitably receiving. (1 St. John v. 14.)

How earthly, how selfish often are my prayers! Lord Jesus, our great High Priest, our

Mediator and Advocate with the Father, we take to ourselves shame for the feebleness, the irresolution, the coldness of our prayers. We lament our many distractions, our want of faith. We beg of Thee to pour upon us the Spirit of grace and of supplication ; may Thy Holy Spirit help our infirmities who know not what to pray for, nor how to pray, as we ought; that, praying in the Holy Ghost, we may rise up to our calling to share Thy priesthood, and acceptably draw near to the Father in Thy name, after Thy example of prayer and self-oblation. (Zech. xii. 10 ; Rom. viii. 26 ; Eph. ii. 18 ; St. John xvi. 23, 24 ; St. Jude 20.)

Almighty and Everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of Thy mercy ; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus-Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

MEDITATION IV.

Our Lord's Example of Love in the Passion.

Listen to the words of our Saviour spoken as from His Cross, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." (St. John xiii. 34, 35.)

Maundy-Thursday is pre-eminently the day of love. It was during the closing hours of this day, the night before He suffered, that Jesus delivered the great *Discourse of Love* recorded by the Beloved Disciple (St. John xiv-xvi.), wherein He gave the *Commandment of Love* one to another, after His example and pattern, and according to His measure. (St. John xv. 12.) It was this night when, having loved His own that

were in the world and loving them unto the end, He bestowed upon them the *Gift of Love*, and instituted and ordained holy mysteries, the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, as pledges of His love.

It is well, then, that we should to-day consider our Lord's *example of love in His Passion.*

I. The Passion is indeed the expression of God's Love.

The Cross is the emblem and witness of Love. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (St. John iii. 16.) In the Passion we see God drawing us with cords of a man, with bands of love. Jesus died (so one has said) because He loved men, and because men did not love Him. He appeals to our pity as our suffering Redeemer, when the appeal which He made to our gratitude as our bountiful Benefactor had failed. His love calls for love. "Greater love hath no one than this, that any one lay down his life for his friends." (St. John xv. 13.) Love is es-

timated by sacrifice, and heightened by the unworthiness of those for whom the outlay is made. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) Jesus gives Himself for us to a death of shame and torture, bears the desertion of all, drains to its dregs the cup of sorrow with all its bitterness. Nothing greater is conceivable in the thought of Love. This manifestation of His love toward us calls for the return of our love to Him. "We love Him *because* He first loved us." (1 St. John iv. 19.) We must learn to love Him *as* He has loved us. For this, we must dwell upon His love, that it may kindle a response of love in our hearts. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost,"—both God's love for us, and our responsive love for God. (Rom. v. 5.) Love begets love. O Blessed Jesus, lifted up from the earth at this sacred season of Thy Passion, draw us unto Thyself we pray Thee. We would kindle our cold hearts at this furnace of holy love. "He loved me and gave Himself for me"—this was the secret of

the apostle's life of self-dedication. (Gal. ii. 20.) "This have I done, this have I borne for thee: what wilt thou do and bear for Me?" I hear Thee say to me, O Blessed Master.

Grant me to throw off all coldness and indevotion; may I resolve to fight out temptations; to embrace the cross, of humiliation or loss, to which Thou callest me; to be ready to lay down my life, or that which seems to make life worth having, for Thee, who hast laid down Thy life for me.

"O Love, who once in time was slain
Pierced through and through with bitter woe;
O Love, who wrestling thus didst gain
That we eternal joy might know;
O Love, I give myself to Thee,
Thine ever, only Thine to be."

II. But our subject is more particularly *the Passion as the example of Love.* The four virtues on which we are meditating as shown forth in the Passion of our Lord, represent four elements of Christian Life after Christ's example. Patience is a passive virtue; silence a more active form of self-discipline; prayer stands

for the devotional element; and love goes forth to others in various forms of beneficence. Jesus, with His arms outstretched upon the cross, places Himself before us as a pattern of charity, that we may endeavor ourselves to follow the example of His most holy life and death of self-sacrifice for others. "Hereby perceive we (says St. John) true love, absolute charity, in that He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 St. John iii. 16.) His unparalleled act of self-sacrifice is to be reproduced in us at however great a distance. Love is the gift of self. In the Incarnation, upon the Cross, in the Holy Sacrament, Jesus gives Himself to us and for us in the most complete manner, placing Himself alongside of us, as it were, and in our place, stooping to our lowly condition that He may raise us to His dignity. This is indeed true love. How different from the base caricature and perversion which too often usurps the sacred name of love, but which really seeks the gratification of self, and degrades instead of elevating those on whom it fastens!

"O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.

O wisest love! that flesh and blood,
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe,
Should strive and should prevail.

O generous love! that He who smote
In Man for man the foe,
The double agony in Man
For man should undergo;

And in the Garden secretly,
And on the Cross on high,
Should teach His brethren, and inspire
To suffer and to die."

Behold Jesus kneeling before His Apostles to wash their feet. In this action, Blessed Jesus, I see an illustration of Thy work for us by Thy incarnation and in the sacraments of Thy grace. Thy sanctified humanity is given to us to be a principle of holiness within our nature, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by Thy all-holy Body, and our sin-stained souls washed in Thy most precious Blood. And thou dost bid us do as Thou hast done. (St. John xiii. 14, 15.) Thy ex-

ample teaches us to place ourselves at the disposal of others for their highest good, to sacrifice for them our means, our time, our thought, our labor. In this lowly act of Thine we see the very pattern of the pure and good and holy mingling with the outcast and degraded, in order to raise and purify them. It is the thought of Thy loving condescension which constrains Thy disciples to spend and be spent for others, in the educational and reformatory work of Thy Church, or to take their life in their hands to minister to plague-stricken sufferers. Grant, O Lord, that I may learn this lesson of self-sacrifice, that I may rejoice to fill up, in devoted labors, that which remains of the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake, which is the Church. (Col. i. 24.) Drive out from every heart all desires and strivings for pre-eminence. Let us seek only to imitate the example of Thy self-abnegation, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give thy life a ransom for many. (St. Matt. xx. 25–28.)

III. But not in general only should we consider our Lord's love in the Passion. Love

was indeed the motive of the Passion as a whole, of all He did and suffered. But also we see through the history of the Passion *particular instances and manifestations of love.*

Heroism is sometimes wanting in gentleness and so loses its attractiveness. How many earnest persons have just failed in this, that the very efforts at self-discipline have made them selfish and hard, too forgetful of others, too much occupied with their own trials! Consider the tender considerateness of Jesus throughout His Passion.

In the garden He pleads for the safety of His disciples while He surrenders himself to His captors. He heals Malchus, wounded by the impetuosity of His disciple. (St. John xviii. 8; St. Luke xxii. 50, 51.)

In the high priest's palace He is mindful of Peter and wins him to repentance with a look of loving reproach. (St. Luke xxii. 61.).

On the way of sorrows He turns to comfort the women who followed and bewailed Him, and sympathizes with them in all that He knew to be coming upon the devoted city. (St. Luke xxiii. 27–31.)

Upon the Cross the first three words were concerned with others. He prays for his enemies; in the penitent robber He pardons one who had been His enemy; He provides for His friends as He commends His mother and His beloved disciple to one another's care. (St. Luke xxiii 34, 43; St. John xix. 26, 27.)

Pain and suffering are so apt to make us selfish. Let us seek, after the example of Jesus, not to be self-absorbed in the midst of woe, but to learn from our own troubles sympathy for others. (2 Cor. i. 6.) It has been said that a Christian should have "a heart of iron towards self, a heart of fire for his God, and a heart of flesh for his neighbors."* This would indeed be a following the example of Christ's Passion. He set His face like a flint to bear all with the majestic endurance on which we have already meditated. He was consumed with zeal for His Father's honor, to accomplish His Father's will. But throughout He showed the most tender love and sympathy for all. As we

* Rev. Dr. Liddon, in a sermon on "The Risen Life." (University Sermons, 1st series.)

kneel before the Cross let us ask this as a gift from the Crucified Redeemer: a *heart of iron* towards self, that we may curb our restless wills, and mortify the flesh with its sinful affections and lusts; *a heart of fire* for our God, that we may dedicate ourselves, all we have and all we are, as a living sacrifice to Him, kindled by the fire of the Spirit of love; and *a heart of flesh* for our neighbor, that we may forgive all injuries, banish all estrangements, and seek, in tender charity, to manifest the sympathy for which sorrowing souls pine; to bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ. (Gal. vi. 2.)

O Blessed Jesus, who dost feed me with Thy Body and Blood offered in sacrifice for the sins of the world, grant that I may be so truly united with Thee by means of this Holy Sacrament, that Thou mayest indeed dwell in me and I in Thee, that Thy Spirit of charity may be seen in me, the charity which suffereth long and is kind, which seeketh not its own, and is not easily provoked; which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (1 Cor. xiii.)

Thus shall I be known as Thy disciple. Thus shall I assure my heart before God. (1 St. John iii. 19.)

O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth, send Thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee. Grant this for Thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

MEDITATION V.

The Lesson of Unworldliness from our Lord's Passion.

Enter in spirit within the Sepulchre in Joseph's garden. Behold there, and with the Angels worship, the Dead Body of the Saviour.

I. The unworldliness of Jesus in His Passion.

The Apostle preached and we worship, and, Oh ! that we might truly follow, "Christ, Crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them that believe Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. i. 23, 24.) Let us consider this paradox of the cross. Jesus had proclaimed before Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world. "If My Kingdom were of this world (He said) then would My ser-

vants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My Kingdom not from hence." (St. John xviii. 36.) Pilate, the Roman Governor, had sneered at the idea of any other kingdom than that which rested on physical force or worldly wealth.

The chief priests had rejected a Messiah who came to effect a spiritual deliverance and had refused an earthly crown. (St. John vi. 15.)

Herod and his courtiers had mocked such a monarch as a madman. (St. Luke xxiii. 11.)

Nevertheless Pilate's title on the Cross, which he would not alter, proclaimed the truth, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." (St. John xix. 19-22.)

Yes, verily, "from the tree He reigned"*—and reigns. The tomb of a Napoleon, the sepulchres of the great ones of the earth, are regarded with a certain curiosity, as witnessing to their downfall, that they too are become like unto us (Isa. xiv. 10); but the sepulchre of Jesus is visited year by year

* Ps. xcvi. 10, Italic version.

by groups of worshippers, as the Gate of Life, as the center of an ever widening empire.

See all through the Passion this paradoxical mingling of shame and glory, of defeat and victory. His triumph spreads as His humiliation deepens. "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, and that death, the death of the cross; *wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and those in earth, and those under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 8-10.) Behold the beginning of His triumph, as He is lifted up on the gibbet of the cross as a malefactor between two robbers. Immediately He begins, according to His word, to draw men to Himself. (St. John xii. 32.) Having in the first word spoken from the cross manifested His perfect dominion over Himself, over all natural feelings of resentment or complaint, He extends that dominion over

others. The robber falls under His sway—the first-fruits of His Passion.

When the climax of His humiliation is reached, and He dies, then the centurion who had superintended His execution, acknowledges the truth of His claims, "certainly (he exclaims) this was a righteous man, God's Son." (St. Luke xxiii. 47 ; St. Mark xv. 39.)

Just when His work seems utterly to fail, does it begin really to succeed. Disciples are scattered : foes are conquered. Lifted up in humiliation as a criminal, He draws men to Himself as a sovereign. When He dies and His enemies appear triumphant, then the quaking rocks, the opened graves, the darkened heavens attest His innocence and His majesty. As He had declared, if the children of men should withhold their acknowledgment, the stones would immediately cry out (St. Luke xix. 40), so now earth below and the heavens above bear witness to His claims, whom men have crucified. (St. Matt. xxvii. 50-52.)

The chief priests exulted that they had rid themselves of this rival to their influence.

But the rent veil of the Temple proclaims Him the true Messiah, and shows the passing away of the typical (which they so jealously, though so falsely guarded) and the advent of the Truth.

But it is not only external signs that bear testimony to Him at His death. The dead Body of Jesus receives honors from Joseph and Nicodemus which were denied Him in His life. These rich men had not dared openly to profess themselves disciples of the popular prophet; but they boldly claim to be venerating friends of the executed criminal. (St. John xix. 38, 39.)

Nor is it by men alone that homage is offered Him. Angels guard and worship that dead Body, the dearer in their sight, as to John and Mary, as to the Eternal Father, for its bruised and wounded plight, the pledge of His love stronger than death, of His perfected obedience. His obedience is rewarded. God honors those who honor Him.

Nor again were they good Angels only that bowed in worship before Jesus crucified. The powers of darkness likewise acknowledge Him.

Put to death in the Flesh He is quickened in the Spirit, and His Soul passed in triumph to Hades, the abode of the departed, to proclaim deliverance to those who were waiting for Him, to change their prison-house into a garden of delight, the antechamber of Heaven. (1 St. Peter iii. 18.)

By death He overthrew him that had the power of death, that is the Devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage. (Heb. ii. 14, 15.)

Wonderful, indeed, is the paradox of the Passion! The weakness of God is shown to be stronger than men, and the foolishness of God wiser than men. (1 Cor. i. 25.) Crucified in weakness Jesus reigns in power. As the true Samson He is more mighty in His death than in His life.

The Apostle's boast concerning His servants is true first of their Lord Himself,—Unknown, He is well known; dying, behold He lives; chastened, He is not killed. (2 Cor. vi. 8, 9.)

Let us learn the lesson of this example, for

ourselves individually, and for the Church of Christ.

a. For ourselves, to be content to be unrecognized, not to be anxious for the world's appreciation and approval. Should not we be rather humbled by the world's commendation, seeing that what it praises must be more or less superficial, since the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned? (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

How can I be anxious, blessed Lord, for the approval of the World which rejected and crucified Thee? It was by the popular verdict that Barabbas, the robber and murderer, was chosen, and Thou, the Innocent One, the King of glory, condemned to death.

b. For our work and for the Church, let us learn to be trustful amid difficulties and disappointments. Learn to rely on spiritual weapons, to look for spiritual results.

We are apt to be discouraged by opposition, by reverses, or at the springing up of misunderstandings and misrepresentations.

Now as ever "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." Uninterrupted, unchecked success in any work of the Church should be regarded with suspicion. It looks as if Satan saw no cause for antagonism. If inroads are really made on his dominion, we may be sure that he will oppose and retaliate. Numerical success is often spiritual failure.

We need to dwell upon (1) *the moral attractiveness to man of suffering*. The Church like her Lord is often most powerful in the influence which she exerts, when outwardly she is most weak and helpless. Our principles are seen to be worthy of attention when we suffer loss or shame for the word of God and for the testimony we have received.

We must learn, too, (2) the *spiritual power of suffering before God*. God accepts and blesses that which is wholly given up to Him. Failure in obedience will be true success. It will be a casting out of Satan, a diminishing of his power in ourselves and in the world. Our contest is not with flesh and blood, but we wrestle against principalities and powers (Eph.

vi. 12) ; and our weapons must not be carnal, but spiritual, and therefore mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. (2 Cor. x. 4.) Jesus in His perfected obedience even unto death tramples upon the spirit of pride which is the beginning of all sin.

The corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die, if it is to spring up and bring forth much fruit. (St. John xii. 24.)

Let us consider then, first, *the Power of the Dead Body of Jesus*, and the law of power which we after His example are to exert.

II. And, secondly, *the Peace of that Dead Body*, the peace which by dying with Him we are to share. Peace, is not this the special characteristic of Easter Eve ? We experience a sense of relief as we kneel in spirit by that grave in Joseph's garden after watching the struggle and the agony of Good Friday. Just as there is a feeling of relief in the midst of bereavement in kneeling by the lifeless form of one however dearly loved, by whose sick bed we have prayed and hoped and ministered, during days or weeks of suffering or weakness.

We love to dwell on the rest which is now gained by the departed, the shadow of the rest of Jesus on the Great Sabbath.

a. Consider the Peace of His Body, as it lies cold and still in Joseph's tomb. We weep for the death that sin has wrought. But we rejoice that there is no more possibility of suffering for that Body. *Insults*, if they could now be offered, though sinful, would not disturb its repose. *Honors*, though rightly offered, call forth no response. That Body is dead to this world. But yet there is (1) *a Divine Life within* that Body. It is inseparably united to the Eternal Person of the Son of God. And there is (2) *a Spiritual Life* belonging to the Human Nature He assumed which is *elsewhere active*. The repose of Jesus on Easter Eve is not the rest of idleness or sloth. Put to death in the Flesh He is quickened in the Spirit.

b. Consider the share we are to have in the peace of this dead Body. We are baptized into His death. The mysteries of His incarnate life have their counterpart in the spiritual life of the faithful. That peaceful Body is a pat-

tern for our Christian life. We are buried with Him by Baptism into death. We have been planted together in the likeness of His death. We are to reckon ourselves also to be dead, indeed, unto sin. And thus we are to be at peace. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." (Rom. vi. 1–11.) This is, indeed, a high ideal which is placed before us. But it is the ideal of the New Testament and of the Baptismal Office of the Church,—a high ideal to be constantly sought after, to be gradually realized. No good can come from lowering the standard of holiness to which we are called. Rather let us in humility be steadfastly pressing on towards the truth. We are to learn from the contemplation of Jesus' death a certain detachment from the world. Why am I so easily moved by the world's applause or censure, why so fretted at slights or injuries, so fascinated by the temptations of wealth, or pleasure, or honor? Surely it is because I am so keenly alive to these things, because, though baptized into Christ's death, I have done so little to mortify my corrupt affections.

Christian deadness to the world does not mean neglect of the duties of our station, or a stolid indifference to human interests. The Christian who is dead to the world is like the Body of Christ in the grave.

(1.) Living by a higher Divine Life in fellowship with God.

(2.) With wider spiritual interests and powers than those which belong to this world.

It is by cherishing the higher life that the lower is to be kept in subordination. Like the dead Body of Jesus in the grave, the Christian is shut in from the world not for emptiness but for higher communion and fellowship. The angels are within that sealed tomb. Thus are we to live *in* the world but not *of* it. (St. John xvii. 14, 15.) Death, the death of Christ into which we are baptized, has come between us and all that is merely of the world. The world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world. (Gal. vi. 14.) Thus are we to meet offers of earthly honor or wealth, or the seductions of the flesh. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live,"—no part of my being is destroyed, but every part is to be

brought under discipline ; death to the world is for the purpose of a higher, better life ; "I live, yet not I," according to my own inclinations or impulses, nor by my own powers ; "but Christ liveth in me" as the inspiring and enabling principle of my life : "and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) For the Christian, who has tasted the powers of the world to come (Heb. vi. 5), the things which belong merely to this world should have as little weight as they can have had with Lazarus when after his sight of the realities of the unseen world be returned for awhile to earth, to live in but not of this world. As he sat at the feast how trivial must have seemed this world's show to his eye, how hollow its words must have fallen upon his ear! Let us remember

1. That our *un*worldliness, likewise is to be *other worldliness*. By virtue of our higher life we are to sit loosely to this life.

2. That this can only be gained by a constant mortification of our earthly nature with its corrupt affections. Death and life are, in

this sense, but the two sides of one shield. It is as we die to self and sin that we rise to newness of life with God. Christ's Death, once suffered, is to be continually reproduced until it is perfected in us. "Baptism doth represent unto us our profession, which is to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that as He died and rose again for us, so should we who are baptized die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness, *continually* mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." (Exhortation at the end of the Baptismal service.)

3. Thus shall we share even now in the peace of the faithful departed, "hidden secretly in God's tabernacle from the strife of tongues." (Ps. xxxi. 22.) "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they *rest* from their labors." (Rev. xiv. 13.)

"He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." (1 St. Pet. iv. 1.)

III. Let us consider *the Expectation of the Dead Body of Jesus.* The day of rest is intermediate between the day of struggle and

the day of triumph. The restful peace of Holy Saturday leads to the joyful Alleluia of the Resurrection festival. The dead Body of Jesus must arise. "Thou shalt not leave My soul in Hades: neither shalt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." (Ps. xvi. 11.) The third day He must rise again, who was delivered to the Gentiles, spat upon, scourged and crucified. There shall be a complete vindication of His claims. He shall be "declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. i. 4.)

And as with Christ, so with His Church, and with His Saints. The souls of them that were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held, cry from beneath the altar, How long, O Lord, dost Thou not avenge our blood? And they are bidden to rest yet for a little season. (Rev. vi. 9-11.) The Truth may seem to perish out of the world, the Church to be well nigh vanquished. But the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. (St. Matt. xvi. 18.) *Magna est veritas et prevalebit.*

The stone may be sealed and the watch set,

but no power can prevent the resurrection of the Truth. The seeming triumph of evil shall soon be spent, the tyranny will soon be overpast. Let us learn courage and steadfastness amidst the sorrows of the Church, amidst denials of the Truth, under all aspersions of character. God will avenge His elect, and that speedily. (St. Luke xviii. 7, 8.)

As we consider the expectation of the Body of Christ, we naturally think of the Faithful Departed—the larger part of His Mystical Body—waiting in Paradise for their perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul. With them and for them, as they too for us, we pray "Thy Kingdom come,"—"that it may please God of His gracious goodness shortly to accomplish the number of His elect, and to hasten His Kingdom" for the perfecting of their joy. (English Burial Collect.) And while we thus associate ourselves with them in their holy expectation, we should learn unworldliness by the consideration of what *they* think important, what they would have us care for, the kind of success for ourselves and for the Church in which

they rejoice. What do those in Paradise who love me truly, desire and ask for me? Is it the success of my enterprises, my worldly advancement, on which their hearts are bent? or are they not indifferent to these accidental circumstances of my outward life, while all their desire is for my spiritual and moral development, in whatever way this may be best effected, by joy or sorrow, success or failure?

By the grave of Jesus, with the thought of those at rest in Paradise, let us correct our worldly notions. Be not despondent at apparent failure, nor elated at seeming success. Let us, as a remedy for our worldly thoughts, meditate upon the power of dying, the peace of death, the expectation of resurrection. In our consideration of these truths, Jesus from His grave, the faithful departed from their place of rest in Paradise, seem to address us in the familiar words of our Burial Lesson: "Therefore, beloved, (because of these things,) be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 58.)

Grant, O Lord, that as we are Baptized into the death of Thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him; and that, through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for His merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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